



Southwestern Idaho News

ADA, ADAMS, BOISE, CANYON, ELMORE, GEM, OWYHEE, PAYETTE, VALLEY & WASHINGTON COUNTIES

ADAMS COUNTY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Council was Idaho's Capital for a Day on Sept. 25, putting Adams County in the spotlight.

ADAMS COUNTY EMPLOYMENT

The Adams County job market has been one of transition over the last 11 years, shifting from dependence on logging and government to a more diverse mix of industries such as manufacturing, trade, tourism and most significantly construction with the development of the Tamarack resort in neighboring Valley County. Since 1995, the annual average covered employment has increased by 33.6 percent from 928 to 1,240 in 2006, and the unemployment rate has plunged from 13.8 percent in 1995 and 6.6 percent last year. Both are remarkable since small counties, especially small rural counties relatively far from a population center, typically struggle to expand their economies.

Despite its successes, Adams County is not without its challenges. It is in danger of becoming a service economy after work at Tamarack tapers off. While this creates jobs and brings outside tourism money to

**Southwestern Idaho Table 2: August 2007
Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Figures for
Southwestern Idaho Counties**

	Civilian Labor Force	Number Unemployed	Percent Unem- ployed	Number Em- ployed
Ada	200,914	4,289	2.1	196,625
Adams	2,118	73	3.4	2,045
Boise	3,896	76	1.9	3,820
Canyon	83,998	2,287	2.7	81,711
Elmore	11,225	334	3.0	10,891
Gem	7,679	187	2.4	7,493
Owyhee	5,067	63	1.2	5,005
Payette	10,425	413	4.0	10,012
Valley	5,531	142	2.6	5,389
Washington	5,217	142	2.7	5,075
Statewide	758,346	17,890	2.4	740,456

Southwestern Idaho Table 1: Boise City-Nampa MSA Labor Force & Employment (Ada, Canyon, Boise, Gem and Owyhee counties)

	Aug 2007*	Jul 2007	Aug 2006	% Change Last Month	% Change Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	301,600	303,200	296,600	-0.5	1.7
Unemployment	6,900	6,200	8,600	11.3	-19.8
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.3	2.0	2.9		
Total Employment	294,700	297,000	288,000	-0.8	2.3
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	301,500	306,400	295,100	-1.6	2.2
Unemployment	6,200	5,700	8,100	8.8	-23.5
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.1	1.9	2.7		
Total Employment	295,300	300,700	287,000	-1.8	2.9
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**					
GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES	281,800	281,200	271,300	0.2	3.9
Natural Resources & Construction	58,000	58,300	57,900	-0.5	0.2
Construction	26,600	26,400	26,000	0.8	2.3
Manufacturing	26,200	26,000	25,600	0.8	2.3
Durable Goods	31,400	31,900	31,900	-1.6	-1.6
Wood Product Manufacturing	25,400	25,900	25,700	-1.9	-1.2
Fabricated Metal Products Mfg.	2,700	2,600	2,700	3.8	0.0
Machinery Manufacturing	1,800	1,800	1,600	0.0	12.5
Computer & Electronic Manufacturing	1,400	1,400	1,300	0.0	7.7
Transportation Equipment Mfg.	14,500	15,100	15,000	-4.0	-3.3
Other Durable Goods	2,600	2,600	2,400	0.0	8.3
Nondurable Goods	2,400	2,400	2,700	0.0	-11.1
Food Manufacturing	6,000	6,000	6,200	0.0	-3.2
Printing & Related Support Activities	4,400	4,300	4,200	2.3	4.8
Other Nondurable Goods	700	700	700	0.0	0.0
SERVICE-PROVIDING INDUSTRIES	900	1,000	1,300	-10.0	-30.8
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	223,800	222,900	213,400	0.4	4.9
Trade	55,800	55,400	52,200	0.7	6.9
Wholesale Trade	48,300	47,800	44,600	1.0	8.3
Wholesalers, Durable Goods	12,600	12,600	12,000	0.0	5.0
Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	7,000	7,000	6,900	0.0	1.4
Retail Trade	3,900	3,900	3,700	0.0	5.4
Food & Beverage Stores	35,700	35,200	32,600	1.4	9.5
General Merchandise Stores	4,700	4,600	4,500	2.2	4.4
All Other Retail Trade	7,300	7,300	6,400	0.0	14.1
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	23,700	23,300	21,700	1.7	9.2
Utilities	7,500	7,600	7,600	-1.3	-1.3
Transportation & Warehousing	700	700	600	0.0	16.7
Information	6,800	6,900	7,000	-1.4	-2.9
Telecommunications	4,700	4,600	4,700	2.2	0.0
Financial Activities	1,300	1,300	1,400	0.0	-7.1
Finance & Insurance	15,300	15,400	14,300	-0.6	7.0
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	10,900	10,900	9,900	0.0	10.1
Professional & Business Services	4,400	4,500	4,400	-2.2	0.0
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	41,700	41,600	40,600	0.2	2.7
Management of Companies & Ent.	12,000	11,900	11,900	0.8	0.8
Administrative & Support & Waste Mgmt.	5,500	5,600	5,700	-1.8	-3.5
Educational & Health Services	24,200	24,100	23,000	0.4	5.2
Educational Services	32,900	32,800	31,600	0.3	4.1
Health Care & Social Assistance	2,300	2,200	2,100	4.5	9.5
Hospitals	30,600	30,600	29,500	0.0	3.7
Leisure & Hospitality	9,900	9,900	9,400	0.0	5.3
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	24,800	24,600	24,200	0.8	2.5
Accommodation & Food Services	3,100	3,100	3,500	0.0	-11.4
Accommodation	21,700	21,500	20,700	0.9	4.8
Food Services & Drinking Places	2,400	2,300	2,200	4.3	9.1
Other Services	19,300	19,200	18,500	0.5	4.3
Total Government	8,000	7,900	6,900	1.3	15.9
Federal Government	40,600	40,600	38,900	0.0	4.4
State & Local Government	5,900	5,900	5,900	0.0	0.0
State Government	34,700	34,700	33,000	0.0	5.2
State Government Education	12,500	12,500	12,500	0.0	0.0
State Government Administration	3,500	3,500	3,600	0.0	-2.8
Local Government	9,000	9,000	8,900	0.0	1.1
Local Government Education	22,200	22,200	20,500	0.0	8.3
Local Government Administration	13,600	13,600	12,200	0.0	11.5
	8,600	8,600	8,300	0.0	3.6

* Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

the area, the jobs are not the high-paying logging, manufacturing or construction jobs of today. As land prices continue to climb in response to Tamarack and service-sector jobs become more prevalent, Adams County could see people begin leaving for better job opportunities elsewhere.

POPULATION

Adams County ranks 41st among Idaho's 44 counties in population and is the sixth smallest in area. In 2006, the population declined 1.6 percent to 3,485. In 2005 the population increased 2.5 percent. The decline followed housing prices escalating beyond the affordable because of the development in Valley County. Residents relocated for work elsewhere. From 1996 to 2006, the overall decline was 5.6 percent. Adams County is the only county in southwestern Idaho to experience a net out migration of residents. As land prices continue to climb and the natural resources industries that Adams County is historically dependent upon decline, the population is likely to continue falling in the near future.

PER CAPITA INCOME

Adams County ranked 10th in the state in 2005 in per capita income at \$26,612, a leap from 16th just one year prior. Part of the reason for this gain is affluent people opting to build second homes in Adams County to avoid the crowds of nearby Valley County. Despite the gains, per capita income remains 7 percent below the state level and 29.5 percent below the national level.

BRUNDAGE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENTS

In March 2006 the J.R. Simplot Co. sold its 50 percent ownership in the Brundage Mountain Ski Resort to long-time co-owners Judd and Diane DeBoer and their family. The sale was made to the DeBoer's Brown's Industries Inc. and Snowy Peaks LLC. Brundage Mountain Resort's first priority will be to develop new runs and lifts that were started several years ago. Brundage experienced one of its best snow seasons on record in 2006 with over 400 cumulative inches of snowfall and 147 days of skiing. A summer resort as well, Brundage has plans for a season of chair-lift mountain biking and scenic lift rides along with weddings and concerts at the resort's facilities.

In addition to the sale, Brundage Mountain Resort and the Payette National Forest completed a land swap in July 2006 that gave Brundage 388 acres of land surrounding the base of the mountain the resort is built on while the Payette National Forest got 350 acres of wetlands and streams with bull trout, salmon and steelhead habitat.

Brundage Mountain Resort announced in April 2007 that it will be adding two new chair lifts to the ski hill by mid-December. The resort is investing over \$3 million on the lifts, which will open up an additional 160 acres of the mountain to skiers. The new lifts will allow an additional 3,600 skiers an hour to use the mountain.

OTHER ADAMS COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS

Private land values in Adams County continue to escalate with spillover development from Valley County. Land values in 2006 increased by 65 percent, or \$190 million, over 2005. The city of New Meadows led the way with increases of up to 400 percent because of its proximity to McCall, Cascade and Donnelly in Valley County.

New Meadows and Adams County are not far behind McCall and Valley County in dealing with the problems of rapid growth, escalating land and building values and a shortage of affordable housing.

With expiration of its subdivision moratorium, the Adams County Commission has adopted a new comprehensive plan and updated subdivision and zoning ordinances. In July 2006 the county adopted a requirement that 10 percent of lots within a development be designated for affordable housing. The lots can be outside the development if the county approves.

The county also joined with Council, New Meadows, Valley County and its cities of Donnelly, McCall and Cascade to form the Valley-Adams Regional Housing Authority in November 2006 to deal with escalating housing and land prices. Officials believe the Housing Authority can help provide opportunities for homeownership for average residents.

Holland Construction unveiled affordable duplexes in Council in June. The units are 1,100 square feet each with three bedrooms renting for \$650 a month. Holland has plans, and the city has already approved city water and sewer hookups, for 48 more units.

In addition, the city of Council has decided to implement a strategic plan developed regionally by the Valley Adams Planning Partnership to address growth management, housing and economic development, focusing on business and work force retention and work force development. The city recently established new planning and zoning fees. Permits for comprehensive plan change, home office, zoning variance, conditional use permit, preliminary subdivision plats, annexation request and a development agreement will cost \$250 each.

In October 2006 C&M Lumber of New Meadows moved to a new location on Idaho Highway 55. The new store at 14,000 square feet is three times larger than the former location. C&M Lumber has also diversified its product line and increased its inventory.

The Adams County Health Center lost part of its funding in the recent election when the voters dissolved the Council Hospital Taxing District. Despite that loss, the health center will remain open as new sources of funds are sought.

The Council library received nearly \$6,000 in new computers in June from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Adams County has been working with Valley and Boise counties to promote the biomass industry. Biomass, or woody biomass, is waste wood from timber operations that is normally just burned. It is now being used to make building materials such as posts, landscaping timbers, mulch, bark and a multitude of other similar products. The Idaho Department of Commerce, the U.S. Forest Service, the West Central Highlands Resource Conservation and Development Area and the rural development arm of the U.S. Department of Agriculture are all signed on as financial partners.

The Southwest Idaho Woody Biomass Partnership comprised of Adams, Boise, Gem and Valley counties received a \$50,000 grant from U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Agency. This grant complements grants totaling \$300,000 from the Idaho Department of Commerce, the U.S. Forest Service and private businesses to operate the partnership for three years.

The Adams County Historic Preservation Commission received a \$257,000 Idaho Community Development Block Grant in July to convert the old courthouse into a community center. The courthouse was built in 1915 and has fallen into disrepair.

The Council Rod & Gun Club received a \$7,500 grant in August from the National Rifle Association to replace the roof of its clubhouse and drill a new well. The association awarded \$145,000 in grants to various clubs and programs.

A new country store opened in Cuprum. The Indian Creek Store is located behind the old Post Office and stocked with all the necessities of a general store.

OTHER SOUTHWESTERN AREA DEVELOPMENTS

BOISE METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA

- Nonfarm payroll jobs in August in the Boise Metropolitan Statistical Area were up 600 from July and 10,000 from August 2006. Nonfarm jobs totaled 281,700, 3.7 percent from a year earlier. Southwestern Idaho Table 3 shows the change in the nonfarm payroll jobs from each August beginning in 1999. The largest gain was in 2000 when retail trade, profes-

sional and business services, health care and leisure and hospitality each added more than 2,000 jobs.

- The loss of 2,100 jobs in August 2002 was a direct result of layoffs in the high-tech sector. Computer and electronics manufacturing shed over 1,600 jobs alone. Another 1,000 jobs were lost in construction. It was the largest year-to-year loss of nonfarm jobs for any August since figures have been provided for the metropolitan area.
- Increased payrolls during August 2007 came from retail trade, which was up 500 with continued development of shopping centers such as the Treasure Valley Market Place in Nampa, and public schools, which added 1,500 jobs from one year ago as a number of new schools opened for the fall term. Other growth areas were administrative and support services, health care and hotels and restaurants. Each added over 1,000 jobs since August 2006. The job losses were in computer and electronics manufacturing, which reported 500 fewer jobs following layoffs at Micron Technology. More detail can be found on Southwestern Idaho Table 1 on page 16.
- The metropolitan unemployment rate in August was 2.9 percent seasonally adjusted up from 2.8 percent in July and matching June's rate for the lowest three-month rate this decade. Boise County at 1.9 percent and Owyhee County at 1.2 percent were the only metro counties under 2 percent. Owyhee matched Teton County for the lowest rate in the state. Payette County reported the highest unemployment in the region at 4 percent. This was the fourth highest rate in the state during August. Unemployment rates for the counties in southwestern Idaho can be found in Southwestern Idaho Table 2 on page 16.
- The labor force was essentially unchanged from July at 301,600, an increase of 5,000 over the last year. The increase was a result of 6,700 more employed persons and 1,700 fewer unemployed persons. Again additional details can be found in Table 1 on page 16.

REGIONAL UPDATES

ADA COUNTY

- A new store in Garden City offers all kinds of signs. For real estate signs, banners, full-color displays or magnetic signs, check out All Sign and Post.
- Boise State University celebrated its 75th birthday in September. Founded by the Episcopal Church, it opened as Boise Junior College with 78 students. The enrollment today is more than 19,000 and is now a public institution.
- CBH Homes turned to online services in light of the slowdown in the housing market. The company has

Southwestern Idaho Table 3: Boise City - Nampa MSA Nonfarm Payroll Jobs			
Date	Payroll Jobs	Percent Change	Numeric Change
Aug-99	218,500	4.3	8,986
Aug-00	234,300	7.2	15,800
Aug-01	238,000	1.6	3,700
Aug-02	235,900	-0.9	-2,100
Aug-03	235,000	-0.4	-900
Aug-04	243,400	3.6	8,400
Aug-05	255,800	5.1	12,400
Aug-06	271,700	6.2	15,900
Aug-07	281,700	3.7	10,000

listed five homes on eBay. The homes ranged in price from \$140,000 to \$210,000, but each had a price threshold that had to be met before it could be sold. At least one home was purchased by a local couple.

- Construction is slowing in the area. Foundation workers are busy through the end of the year, but next year is looking slow. Commercial building has dominated the last few months, but that appears to be slowing down as the year ends.
- Eagle now has a place where people can get snowboarding clothes and accessories. Epic Apparel and Board recently opened in Eagle to claim that niche market.
- Penny Lane Books, a children's book, game, gifts and educational toy store, recently opened in Eagle.
- Peterson Autoplex reached a deal with Oregon-based Lithia Motors for Peterson to take over the Chevrolet franchise in Boise. The Autoplex will have three dealerships in the Treasure Valley. Peterson Autoplex on Fairview will offer Toyota, Lexus, Chrysler, Jeep, Kia and BMW vehicles. The Peterson Stampede dealership in Nampa offers Dodge, Chrysler and Jeep vehicles. Chevrolet allows only one franchise in a market so this was a great opportunity for Peterson.
- The U.S. Department of Labor approved a National Emergency Grant for \$800,000 to \$2 million to help the 1,100 workers laid off by Micron Technology this summer. The federal grant will provide workers with a wide array of assistance such as relocation subsidies and job training.
- There is a new call center in the area – Dial 411. It plans to hire 300 workers by next year. It is a call center version of the yellow pages.

BOISE COUNTY

- South Fork Landing development in Garden Valley has sold 60 cabins and lots for a total of \$20.8 million.

CANYON COUNTY

- Fashionz opened recently in Caldwell. The store sells clothing for men and women.
- Vallivue School District and the city of Nampa have agreed to amend the city urban renewal plan so downtown revitalization projects do not take future property tax revenue away from the school district. The urban renewal district will rebate to the school district the tax revenues it would otherwise receive. The city also plans to return funds to the Nampa School District. The urban renewal district includes portions of both school districts.

- D. L. Evans Bank recently opened a second location in Nampa. The new bank is located on Caldwell Boulevard.
- Friendly Flooring and Much More LLC opened in September in Caldwell. The business provides carpet, tile, wood, vinyl, counter tops, cabinets and granite among other surfaces.
- Knipe Land Company Inc., a 63-year-old Idaho real estate company founded in Nampa, has formed subsidiary Knipe Land North LLC. The new company specializes in timbered parcels, timbered building sites and recreational and timbered hunting and fishing properties.
- MPC Corp. grew four times bigger with the purchase of Gateway's Professional Business Division. With the acquisition, MPC gains a larger portfolio of customers in the education, government and commercial sectors. The purchase will more than double the number of employees from 550 to 1,200. MPC plans to add 100 employees in support and service roles at its headquarters in Nampa. The purchase will allow the company to compete with giants like Dell and get better deals on materials and components. The acquisition includes a manufacturing site in Nashville and a call center in North Sioux City, S.D.
- Sky Ranch Business Center has another new tenant. Idaho Athletic Club opened its doors in August. The facility has exercise equipment, a pool, racquetball courts, a steam room, a sauna and a hot tub. The athletic club joins Thomas Jefferson Charter School as the second operating tenant in the development. Other planned tenants include BMC West, Medical Imaging Center and the Idaho Department of Labor.
- Syringa House doubled in size as it opened its new facility in late August. Syringa House in Nampa provides residential, therapeutic and educational services to troubled girls ages 11 to 18 and their families. The new 14,000-square-foot facility has 24 beds, double the 12 in the previous house.
- The Nampa Civic Center broke ground in August on a 5,500 square-foot expansion. The \$600,000 addition doubles the size of the existing dressing rooms, expands the stage, backstage and storage areas and increases public restrooms. The addition is expected to be completed in October 2008. The center hosts more than 200 performances annually along with 700 other scheduled events.
- The Nampa/Caldwell Chamber of Commerce Agri-Business Committee sponsored a two-day Treasure Valley Ag Tour to give legislators an in-depth understanding of agriculture and the issues facing the region. Participants learned about biodiesel production,

water issues, production and distribution of feed, new Homeland Security regulations and development and farm labor issues. Stops on the tour included Symms' Fruit Ranch, Christensen Farms mint still, Beranna Dairy, Idaho Power, Amalgamated Sugar Co.'s sugar beet field, Simplot Potato Plant and the University of Idaho's Food Technology Center.

- The University of Idaho opened its Caldwell complex recently. The site already had two buildings – the Caldwell Business and Technology Incubator and the Food Technology Center. A new building completed in November houses the university's research and extension center. This center focuses on range economics, beef production, dairy production and 4-H and computer support.
- Treasure Valley Market Place has several new tenants – Clearwire, Hairmasters, Simmer Chiropractic and Tully's Coffee.

ELMORE COUNTY

- Mona Boutique in Mountain Home is a one-stop shop for all women and their clothing needs. The store opened in late August.
- Los Fuentes is now Los Primos. The restaurant opened under new ownership in mid-August. The food will continue to be Mexican but with a different style of cooking. Everything on the menu is home-made from the meat, sauces, chorizo and tamales to the tortilla chips.
- The 47th Annual Air Force Appreciation Day was held in Mountain Home on Sept. 8. The day is a special tribute to the men and women of the armed forces and in particular those assigned to the Mountain Home Air Force Base. It draws more than 10,000 spectators each year who give a lift to the area's economy.
- The LaBella Salon leased retail space in Mountain Home recently.

OWYHEE COUNTY

- A \$23 million plan was approved recently by Congress to restore high desert land scorched by the Murphy complex fire. The fire destroyed more than 1,000 square miles of sage and grass needed for wildlife and cattle. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management plans to spend \$9 million on both protective fencing and repairs to permanent fences that divide cattle grazing allotments. Immediately set aside was \$11.4 million for grass seed to replant a huge area to prevent soil erosion. The burned area should be seeded with native and other grasses to prevent further spread of alien weeds like highly flammable cheat grass.

PAYETTE COUNTY

- The Big Nasty returned to Payette County. The Northwest's only national motorcycle hill climb is expected draw more than 12,000 spectators and 300 participants, making it Idaho's single largest motorcycle event.
- All Star Gymnastics Dance and Cheer has been sold. The new business will keep its previous name, but Anna Avera is the new owner. All Star Gymnastics serves children ages 3 and up.
- Base to Final LLC will lease 10,000 square feet from the city of Payette to build a nine plane hanger. The building will be owned by individuals using the hangers. The company says its main purpose is to help the airport prosper.
- Fruitland passed a \$14.8 million bond to build a new water treatment center that should be completed in 2010.
- Maverick in Payette recently held its grand opening.

VALLEY COUNTY

- The Roxy in Cascade has new owners. Jason and Trisha Speer bought the theater to save it. They want to make some improvements and plan to offer special promotions to draw from Donnelly and McCall. They want a place for kids to hang out and provide family entertainment. The theater's sound system will be converted to digital in the fall and a few rows of stadium seating will be added. They also hope to present live entertainment – comedians, bands and stage performances.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

- Citizens gathered in Weiser to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the train depot. The event was not only a chance to commemorate the centennial of the depot but to promote the restoration of the depot building.

BOISE AND VALLEY COUNTIES

- While it isn't quite time to dust off the skis and snowboards, the southwestern Idaho resorts are getting ready for the winter season. All have seen their first snow. Most need two to three feet to open. But at least snow has started to fall so get out the wax.

John Panter, Regional Economist
205 E. Watertower Lane, Meridian, ID 83642
(208) 364-7785, ext. 3599
E-mail: john.panter@labor.idaho.gov